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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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TO : Assistant Director, Current Intelligence DATE: 11 February 1952

FROM : Chairman, Publications Board

SUBJECT: Comments on General Betts' letter to General Smith

1. The lack of reliable information on high level contacts between the Soviet and the Chinese leaders leaves much room for speculation on the nature of Sino-Soviet cooperation. It is reasonably evident, however, that in developing its Far Eastern policy the USSR has been sufficiently astute to identify international communist strategy to a marked degree with Chinese nationalist aspirations; and there is little doubt that the Russians have dealt with the Chinese on the basis of negotiation and persuasion rather than compulsion.

2. Because of the historical differences in the cultural, economic, and political evolution of the two countries some basic divergences, tending toward conflict, are to be expected. While evidence is lacking there is widespread speculation that differences have developed over economic and military timetables, the extent of Chinese participation as the "executant" of mutually agreed to military ventures, administration of frontier regions, and the strategy on the truce talks in Korea. The present apparent identity of interest, however, will in all likelihood be decisive in resolving such differences and thus forestalling the development of Titoism in the near future.

3. In any assessment of communist China's capabilities for independent action it must be understood that China is not a major industrial power nor can it become one in the foreseeable future. China can only be as strong as the Soviet Union wants it to be under present world alignments. The USSR has given China modern military strength enabling it to compete with the UN on a relatively equal basis in Korea. Chinese successes, however, are not based on an indigenous military potential or a modern technology. These elements, always required to support a modern military power, are lacking within China.

4. General Betts is believed correct when he states that the Russians want to maintain continued military action in Indochina as a "running sore"; but do not want to give the Chinese such extensive military support as to lose control over what is militarily a limited operation but politically is of global significance. It is not believed that the Chinese communists independently of the USSR would attempt to conquer and occupy any part of Southeast Asia.

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5. There is no evidence to support the notion that Soviet foreign policies are shaped in large part by Moscow's fear of an intransigent and competitive China. Both are bound together by firm ideological bonds. Chinese leadership has found it expedient and profitable to accept the thesis of Soviet supremacy. It is believed that Chinese communist spokesmen are in deadly earnest when they assert that only the closest attachment to the Soviet Union will permit the Peking regime to achieve its domestic and foreign objectives.

6. Far Eastern developments appear to demonstrate, therefore, that the West cannot expect a power contest between the two states. Indeed evidence strongly suggests that Western nations are confronted with the execution of a comprehensive and well-coordinated international communist program. The possibility of success for Western political maneuvers based on the assumption of present Soviet-Chinese differences is unpromising.

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Articles in the Current Intelligence Review which
support the thesis in the attached memorandum

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1. Recent Communist Pronouncements Belie Chinese-Soviet Split -
15 August 1951.
2. "Suppression of Counter-Revolutionaries" in Communist China -
22 August 1951.
3. Communist China and the "Liberation" of Asia - 29 August 1951.
4. The Chinese Communist Threat to Southeast Asia - 29 August 1951.
5. Soviet Aid to Communist China - 5 September 1951.
6. The Continuing Problem of Communist Terrorism in Malaya -
10 October 1951.
7. Communists May Intensify Activities in Southeast Asia -
24 October 1951.
8. Communist Intentions in Korea - 14 November 1951.
9. The Soviet Hold on Communist China - 14 November 1951.
10. Implications of Chinese Communist Control of Tibet -
21 November 1951.
11. Chinese Communist Aid to Southeast Asian "Liberation" Movements -
28 November 1951.
12. The Current Situation in Kashmir - 12 December 1951.
13. The Soviet Role in the Korean War - 19 December 1951.
14. Communist Menace to Burma Aggravated - 19 December 1951.

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REMARKS:

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Cooperation - 11 Feb 1952